

# Personalized Learning & Advisory



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SMALLER LEARNING COMMUNITIES PROGRAM  
2010 PROJECT DIRECTORS' MEETING

# The Many Faces of Personalized Learning



When you hear the term  
**PERSONALIZED LEARNING**, what do you...

- Think?
- See?
- Feel?



# Session Objectives



## Participants will...

- align ideas about personalized learning strategies to the goals and objectives of their SLC grant
- build awareness, to include relevant research and outcomes, of selected personalization strategies
- leave with tools they can use at their sites to facilitate discussion at home
- identify some of the key cultural elements, and role clarifications, within the school that must change to support the implementation of personalized learning strategies
- organize their thinking on implementing personalized learning strategies around the following framework: Purpose, Organization, Content, Assessment, and Leadership

“See It, Hear It, and Do It”

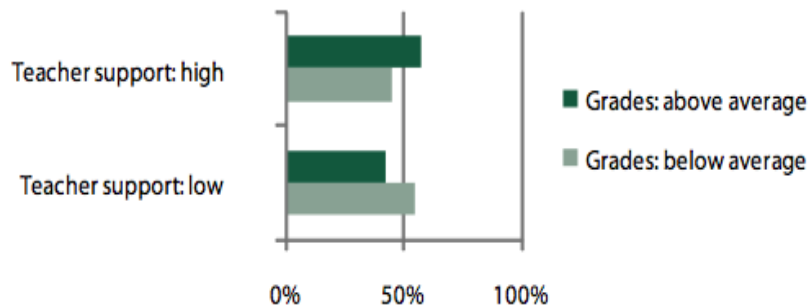
# Why Do We Need to Personalize Learning for Adolescents?



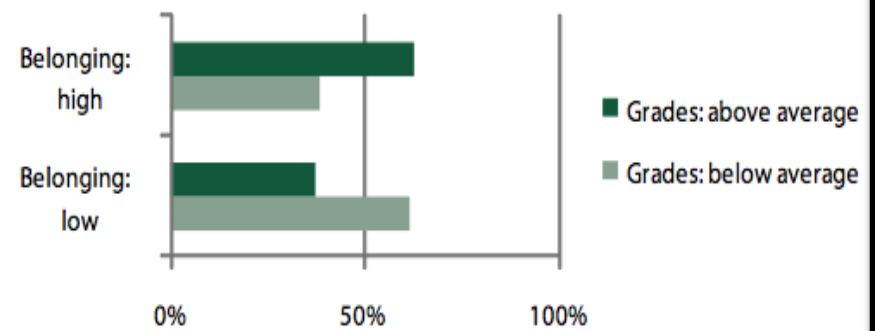
- The CDC defines school connectedness as “the belief held by students that the adults and peers in their school care about their learning as well as about them as individuals”
- School Connectedness is...
  - Feeling **positively** about education
  - Feeling a sense of **belonging** in the school environment
  - Having positive **relationships** with school staff and other students

Carsey Institute; Fall 2010 Issue Brief

**FIGURE 3. STUDENTS' GRADES BY PERCEPTION OF TEACHER SUPPORT\*\***



**FIGURE 4. STUDENTS' GRADES BY SENSE OF BELONGING\*\*\***



# The Smaller Learning Communities RFP



- The structural changes are typically complimented by **personalization strategies**, such as student advisories, freshman academies, family advocate systems, and mentoring programs
- Creating a more **personalized learning environment** can reduce disruptive behavior, create a more orderly learning environment for learning, and increase student attendance and graduation rates

(Lee and Smith 1995; Wasley et al., 2000; McMullan, Sipe, and Wolf, 1994; Quint, 2006; National Research Council, 2004)

# Personalized Learning



*A learning process in which schools help students assess their own talents and aspirations, plan a pathway toward their own purposes, work cooperatively with others on challenging tasks, maintain a record of their explorations, and demonstrate their learning against clear standards in a wide variety of media, all with the close support of adult mentors and guides.*

*(Clarke, 2003, p.15)*

<b>Purpose:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Why are we implementing the strategy?</li> <li>- What do we hope to accomplish?</li> </ul>
<b>Organization:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Who is involved?</li> <li>- What are their roles and responsibilities?</li> <li>- What materials and resources will they need?</li> <li>- When and where will they do what needs to be done to fulfill the purpose of the initiative?</li> <li>- Which structures will be used or will be created to support the initiative?</li> </ul>
<b>Content:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Which lessons, forms, activities, and/or student work collection systems will we use?</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What information do we want to gather to help us improve our initiative?</li> <li>- How will we know whether or not this initiative is effective and accomplishes its purpose?</li> <li>- Which surveys or rubrics will we use or create to gather the information we need?</li> <li>- What will we do with this information once we get it?</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Who are the formal and informal leaders?</li> <li>- What will their new roles and responsibilities be while implementing the strategy?</li> <li>- What Professional Development needs will be necessary along the way, at the end of each year, and the beginning of each year?</li> <li>- Who are the resisters? Who needs updated communication about the progress of the program?</li> <li>- How have the roles and responsibilities for members of the team changed from regular day-to-day activities?</li> </ul>

Important Questions to Ask... Five **Key Dimensions** to the Success of **ALL** Personalized Learning Strategies



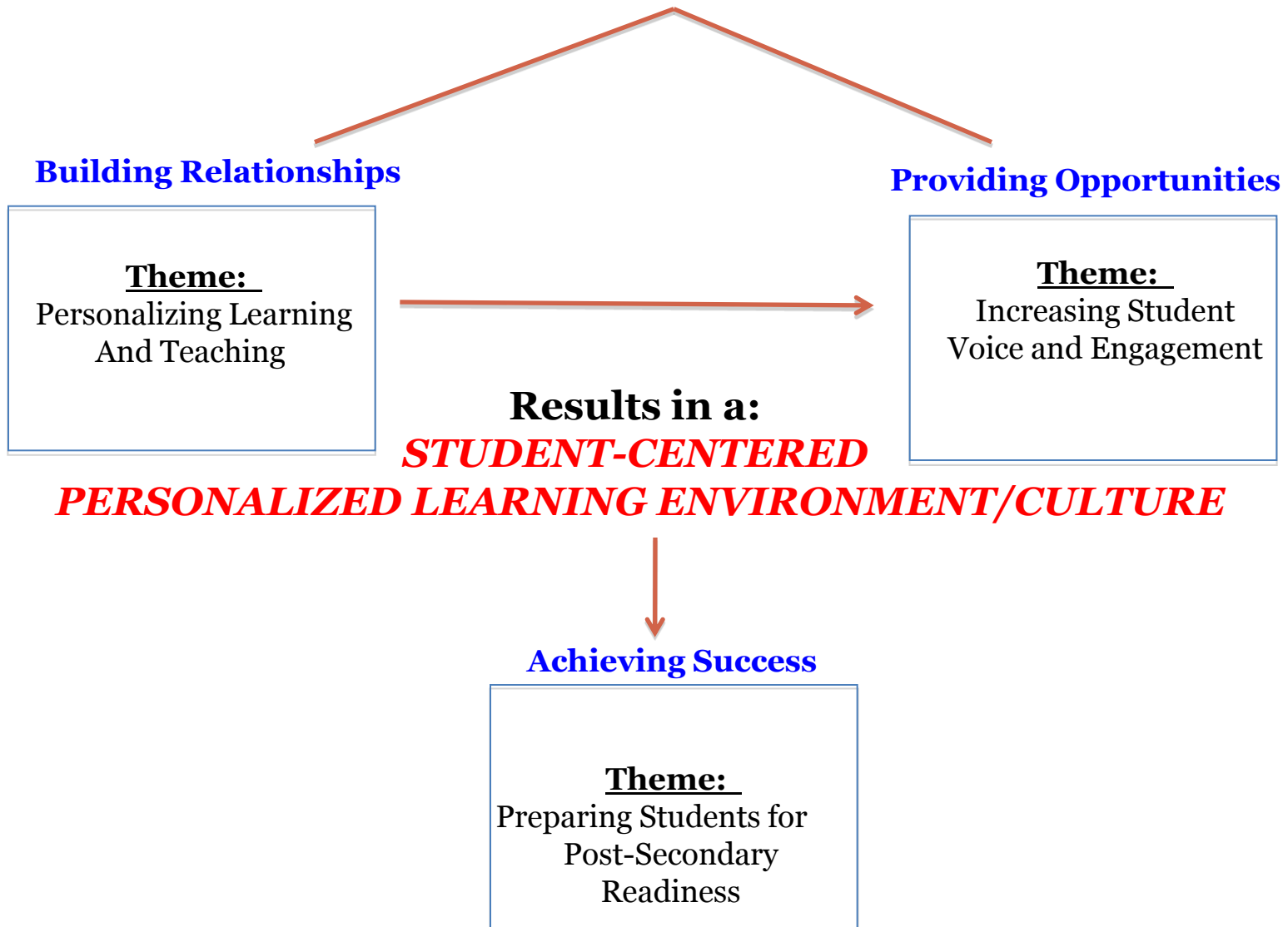
# Changing the Culture to a Personalized Learning Environment



PERSONALIZED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT		
REQUIRES EFFORT IN:	IMPACT ON STUDENTS	IMPACT ON OUTCOMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Guiding Personalized Learning</li><li>• Personal Learning Plans</li><li>• Personalized Teaching</li><li>• Community-Based Learning</li><li>• Personalized Assessment</li><li>• Personalizing Systems</li></ul>	<p><b>SELF-DIRECTED LEARNER</b></p> <p>Ownership for learning goals and the learning process</p>	<p><b>ENHANCED:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Academic Performance</li><li>• Social Growth</li><li>• Emotional Growth</li><li>• Civic Responsibility</li><li>• Postsecondary Readiness &amp; Success</li></ul>



# ***The Smaller Learning Communities Grant: Personalization Themes***





# What Does the Research Say to Support Personalized Learning?



- “The quality of teacher–student relationships is the keystone for all other aspects of classroom management.”  
(—Marzano and Marzano, Dimensions of Learning)
- “Teachers who use more learner-centered practices (i.e., practices that show sensitivity to individual differences among students, include students in the decision-making, and acknowledge students’ developmental, personal and relational needs) produced greater motivation in their students than those who used fewer of such practices  
(-Daniels & Perry, 2003; Perry & Weinstein, 1998.)
- “Children who have higher quality relationships with their teachers have higher participation rates and engagement in the classroom than peers with lower quality relationships”  
(-Buhs, Ladd, & Herald, 2006; Ladd, Birch & Buhs, 1999)

***It's a tricky question. After all, how do you quantify a relationship?***

# ***Building Relationships Between Students and Adults***

## **Essential Elements:**

- Relationship beyond the typical student (learner) teacher (instructor) design
- Social and emotional connection, not just academic
- Schedules and priorities that allow teachers to appreciate students
- Create opportunities where students are mentored by a caring adult
- Building “trust”

## **Research Says:**

“Students who experience positive student-teacher relationships are more likely to demonstrate adaptive classroom behaviors and academic success than their peers without these positive relationships with teachers.”

(Birch & Ladd, 1997; Hamre & Pianta, 2001; Pianta, 1999 & Stuhlman, 2004)

## **Cultural Shift:**

- Teachers become facilitators not ONLY instructors
- It is “OUR” school

## **Personalized Learning Strategies Suggestions:**

- **Advisory, Family Advocacy, Mentoring, Student-Led Conferences, PLPs**



# ***Increasing Student Voice and Engagement***

## **Essential Elements:**

- Allowing students to see themselves as part of the solution, and not part of the problem!
- Creating collaborative leadership – WHOLE community of learners
- Peer-to-peer relationships
- Who am I? What do I want? How can I find out? What did I learn?



## **Research Says:**

“To understand the events and interactions that engage students during a typical school day, researchers discovered six developmental needs students have – Voice, Belonging, Choice, Freedom, Imagination, and Success.”  
(Clarke & Frazerm, 2003)

## **Cultural Shift:**

- School governing activities include student participation
- Students leading discussions on their own learning needs and ambitions
- Building capacity among all members of the school community

## **Personalized Learning Strategies Suggestions:**

- **Mentoring, Student-Led Conferences, Personal Learning Plans, Site Council**

# ***Preparing Students for Post-Secondary College and Career Readiness***

## **Essential Elements:**

- Empowering students with the necessary skills to be successful in life (21<sup>st</sup> Century)
- Creating a community that assists students and parents to “get smart”
- Aligning student/world needs with the community
- Fair and equitable access

## **Research Says:**

“When the personal learning plan work is organized by a team of teachers, the student can begin to see connections between course work and personal goals, and the team can devise assignments that differentiate among students with differing view of themselves in the future. A PLP approach that shapes the whole student experience engages the largest number of students. Personalized high schools such as the Met in Providence, University Heights HS in NY, and New Tech HS in Napa, CA regularly report college acceptance rates that approach 100%.”  
(Steinberg, 2001; Washor, 2003)



## **Cultural Shift:**

- De-Tracking!
- High Expectations for All and not only a few /College Prep for ALL students
- Inquiry-based learning
- Allowing for multiple pathways
- New role for the Guidance Department

## **Personalized Learning Strategies Suggestions:**

- **Advisory, Mentoring, Dual Enrollment, Personal Learning Plans, Articulated Credit**

# Prioritizing Personalized Learning Strategies



- **TASK:**
  - Please list, in priority order, the personalized learning activities/strategies that are part of your SLC Grant. Please prioritize based on the activity/strategy's potential impact on student outcomes – from most to least
  - We will revisit your results after the grantee-presenter's presentation



- Grantee-Presenter:

- New York City Department of Education

- ✦ Wendy Gonzales, Director of SLC High Schools, NYCDOE
    - ✦ Tim Gannon, Principal, Port Richmond High School

- Presentation Focus:

- *Report Card Conferencing*

- Listen for strategies New York has used to change the culture of the school and to...

- Build student/teacher relationships!
  - Increase student voice and engagement!
  - Prepare all students for post-secondary readiness!

# Report Card Conferences

Personalization

REPORT CARD				
GRADING PERIOD	1	2	3	4
READING	A			
WRITTEN COMMUNICATION	A			
MATHEMATICS	C			
SCIENCE/HEALTH	B			
SOCIAL STUDIES	B			
ART	A			
MUSIC	A			
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	C			
Grade Average	B			
Attendance:	Present	48		
	Absent	0		
	Tardy	1		
A = Excellent • B = Good • C = Satisfactory • N = Needs Improvement U = Unsatisfactory • I = Insufficient / Incomplete				
Student: _____ Grade: _____ Year: _____				

Inspired by and special acknowledgment to:

# OWNERSHIP



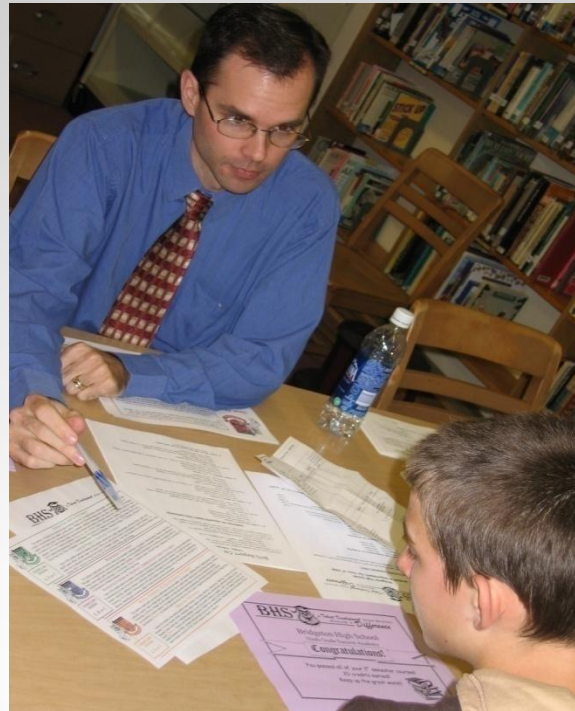
# What are Report Card Conferences??

- A caring adult who reviews a student's report card each marking period.
- All students participate.
- Students reflect on their progress and share why they are successful or what may be impeding their success.
- Teachers follow up with students who are not doing as well as they can through a recovery contract completed at the conference.



# Personalization

- Students have a one –on- one interaction with an adult each marking period.
- Catches students who are “caught in the cracks.”
- Follow-up with teachers using a recovery contract that provides a focus for improvement.



# Students have Professional Conversations

*The belief is that talking to a trusted-but-objective adult takes the emotion out of the process and helps students focus on what's really holding them back.*

Greg Toppo, USA TODAY  
12/4/2006





# Ownership



# Ownership

Students:

- See the report card as a tool toward success.
- Become involved in a reflective process.
- Respect the process. “Conferencers” are NOT their teachers – so by meeting with an “objective” adult students are very honest about how they achieved their current grade.
- Set new and measurable goals for both the short term and long term.



# Certificates



- Recognize achievement
- Graduation requirements
- Extracurricular activities
- Keys to Success

## GWHS STUDENT RECOVERY CONTRACT



PRINT STUDENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

TEACHER: \_\_\_\_\_ SUBJECT \_\_\_\_\_

### WE NEED TO TALK – I NEED YOUR HELP!

AFTER RECEIVING MY REPORT CARD, IT HAS COME TO MY ATTENTION THAT I AM NOT REACHING MY ACADEMIC POTENTIAL AND CAN DO BETTER. BUT I KNOW THAT IT IS NOT TOO LATE. COULD YOU PLEASE LET ME KNOW A TIME WHEN WE CAN MEET TO DISCUSS MY GRADE IN YOUR CLASS AND WHAT I CAN DO TO IMPROVE IT IN THE FUTURE?

I FEEL MY PROBLEM IS A RESULT OF (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY):

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> MY ATTENDANCE   | <input type="checkbox"/> MY BEHAVIOR                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I DON'T UNDERSTAND THE MATERIAL                           | <input type="checkbox"/> I NEED ADDITIONAL HELP      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LOW TEST SCORES   | <input type="checkbox"/> NOT COMPLETING MY CLASSWORK |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NOT COMPLETING MY HOMEWORK                                | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MY PARENT/GUARDIAN WOULD ALSO LIKE TO ATTEND OUR MEETING. |  |

\_\_\_\_\_  
STUDENT SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

MET WITH STUDENT ON \_\_\_\_\_  
(DATE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
TEACHER SIGNATURE

Professional Development is provided to staff on motivating students and how to use recovery contracts to improve grades.

Name:	<b>STUDENT ACTION</b>	Teacher:
	<b>PLAN</b>	
	Date:	

+ <b>What helped me learn this week?</b>	Δ <b>What should I change to learn better?</b>

<b>Plan</b>	I will improve:
<b>Do</b>	I will do this by:
<b>Study</b>	My results were:
<b>Act</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> This worked. I will repeat my plan. <input type="checkbox"/> This did not work. I will make a new plan.





# Outcomes

- Students look forward to *Report Card Conferences* in order to share with the “conferencer” their improvement.
- Avoids the “second marking period slide.”
- Teachers have an opportunity to have a focused conversation with the student using the recovery contract
- Students are not allowed to *give up* – they realize that someone cares and wants them to succeed. Every student is valued.



# Extended Benefits/Connections

- Interdisciplinary teams create action plans for students based on recovery contracts
- Freshman Seminar teachers assist students in preparing for their first conference
- Build school community capacity by inviting school support staff, counselors, librarians/media specialists, district personnel, alumni, local business and government staff, etc. to participate as a “conferencer”
- Conferences can be done at interim time to enable students to improve before receiving report cards





# Student Feedback



- “I feel like I still have a chance now, when I came in I wanted to throw my report card away.”
- “I didn’t know the word ‘advocate’ before I met that lady, but I will speak up for myself now.”
- “Somebody actually cares about me. I hope I get to talk to him again next time.”
- “I realize that it’s never too late.”



# It Takes A Village!



[wgonzales@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:wgonzales@schools.nyc.gov)

# Participant Inquiry Workshop



## Workshop Outcomes:

- Participants will identify some of the key cultural elements within the school that must change to support the implementation of their most important personalized learning strategy and have “talking points” to bring back to their own school to begin a professional conversation with their team
- Grantees from ‘o8 Cohort
  - Evaluate where you started, where you wanted to be, and where you are today. Identify the causes for current gaps, and use the results to start conversation with your teams back at home
- Grantees from ‘10 Cohort
  - Evaluate where you are now vs. where you would like to be at the end of your grant funding. Identify what immediate steps need to take place to help you and your school community make the shift to a more personalized learning environment/culture.

# Site Culture Evaluation



SUB-OPTIMAL CULTURE/PRACTICE	STARTING POINT - O CURRENT STATUS - □ FUTURE GOAL - Δ	BEST CULTURE/PRACTICE	PRIORITY
a. Top-down Leadership	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	a. Collaborative/Distributive Leadership	
b. Independent and non-integrated change initiatives	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	b. Team-driven and integrated change initiatives	
c. Activity oriented – little ownership for change/results	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	c. Results oriented – ownership for change	
d. Fire-fighting/ad hoc decision making	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	d. Strategic decision making	
e. Communication deficits	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	e. Inclusive, transparent and rapid communication	
f. Adult-centered environment	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	f. Student-centered, personalized environment	
g. Low stakeholder involvement	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	g. High stakeholder involvement, incl. parents and community etc.	
h. Course success focus	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	h. Post-secondary readiness and success focus	
i. Individual teacher effort	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	i. Collaborative teaming – professional learning communities	
j. Teaching	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	j. Learning	
k. Your Kids and My Kids	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	k. Our Kids	
l. Rigid scheduling	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	l. Flexible scheduling – supports values, vision, mission, goals	



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# Teacher Role Clarification



ROLES	Low	High
• <b><u>INSTRUCTOR</u></b> : Content expert; presents information; imparts specific knowledge in line with curriculum requirements		
• <b><u>COACH</u></b> : Skill developer; provider of candid and constructive feedback; motivator re: academic, social, and civic growth; provides encouragement		
• <b><u>PARENT</u></b> : Goes above and beyond to insure a student's success; takes a personal interest in all aspects of the student's life; directs behavior; sets limits; protector		
• <b><u>MENTOR</u></b> : Role model for specific behaviors or roles; provides guidance and direction through the sharing of experiences		
• <b><u>COUNSELOR</u></b> : Helps seek solutions to intra and interpersonal problems of an emotional nature; assists with conflict resolution and "acting out" related issues		
• <b><u>ADVISOR</u></b> : Provides academic and career related advice; directs to needed resources; suggests alternative courses of action to solve problems or meet goals		
• <b><u>DISCIPLINARIAN</u></b> : Administers discipline for specific infractions; insures rules and regulations are upheld		
• <b><u>FACILITATOR</u></b> : Places ownership of learning on students; focuses on the process of learning; employs multiple techniques to foster learning and communication		
• <b><u>FRIEND</u></b> : A trusted confidant of personal information; is non-judgmental; shares own needs, fears and concerns with students; personal supporter and sympathizer		
• <b><u>ADVOCATE</u></b> : Stands up for students; assists students deal with adversity; defender; assists students to plead case; touts students' achievements		



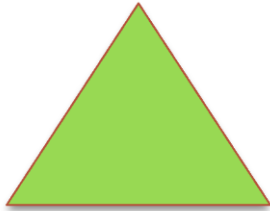
# Time to Reflect



- In your workbook you are asked to answer three questions.
  - How does the material presented inform our work towards meeting our stated grant goals and objectives?
  - How does the work presented in this session complement the larger goals and initiatives currently in place in my district?
  - What do we need to consider to ensure sustainability of these ideas beyond grant funding?



What Squares with my thinking?



Three points I want to remember?



Thoughts still running around?



Future Action?

# Our Ultimate Goal:



“A school ought to be a magical place where you are queen or king and where what you get to do is to focus on your intellect, and on what you can accomplish as a human being, and you come to understand what your life can be....Not a place where you go and hear everyday about the problems that you are. Not a place where you go where people tell you that you are underperforming. Not a place where you go and people tell you that you are part of some pathology. Not a place where you go to study for a standardized test....School should be a place where you go to find out how magical your mind is and how terrific it will be when you develop your mind to its full potential.”

-Ruth Simmons  
Brown University

A hand-drawn list of student traits on a piece of paper. The text is written in various colors and styles of handwriting. The traits listed are: We Are All, Inquirers, Thinkers, Communicators, Risk-Takers, Caring, Knowledgeable, Principled, Open-Minded, Well-Balanced, and Reflective People!

We Are All  
Inquirers, Thinkers,  
Communicators,  
Risk-Takers, Caring,  
Knowledgeable,  
Principled, Open-Minded,  
Well-Balanced, and  
Reflective People!

# Thank You!



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